Exploring August’s Birthstones: Peridot, Spinel, and Sardonyx

August is one of the few months with three birthstones peridot, spinel, and sardonyx each offering unique colors, legends, and meanings. This variety gives those born in August a rich selection of gemstones to explore, each with its own look and symbolism.

Birthstones have long been admired for their appearance and believed to offer protection, wellness, and luck. August’s trio brings a broader mix of meanings and visual appeal than most other months.

Peridot: The Gem of the Sun

Peridot is known for its vivid lime-green color, tied closely to sunlight and summer's warmth. Its natural glow and historical use in spiritual practices make it a standout gem.

Color and Appearance

Peridot ranges from yellow-green to deep olive green. Its color is natural, shaped by iron levels in the mineral. Unlike many gemstones, peridot typically undergoes no treatments to boost its color. It gives off a bright, golden-green glow, visible even under artificial light.

History and Lore

The earliest known source is Zabargad Island in Egypt. Ancient Egyptians referred to it as the "gem of the sun" and wore it for protection. Some believe Cleopatra's emeralds were actually peridots. In Hawaiian tradition, the stone is said to be the tears of Pele, the volcano goddess fitting, as it forms deep in the Earth and comes to the surface through volcanic activity.

Properties and Benefits

- **Protection**: Worn for safety and to ward off bad dreams.
- **Healing**: Associated with the heart chakra; thought to ease stress and support overall health.
- **Prosperity**: Linked to wealth and goal-setting.
- **Emotional Support**: Believed to promote clarity, self-worth, and joy.

Fashion and Jewelry

- **Rings**: Peridot rings, especially in gold, highlight its vivid color.
- **Earrings**: Available in various forms from studs to drops.
- **Necklaces**: Used in pendants or layered chains.
- **Bracelets**: Offered in simple or detailed designs.

Care Tips

With a Mohs hardness of 6.5 to 7, peridot should be handled with care. Clean using warm water, mild soap, and a soft brush. Avoid harsh chemicals and high heat.

Spinel: A Hidden Treasure

Spinel comes in many colors, including red, pink, violet, and blue. Its clarity and sparkle rival those of ruby and sapphire.

Color and Appearance

Spinel's color range gives it wide appeal. Some famous "rubies," like the Black Prince's Ruby in the British Crown Jewels, are actually spinel.

History and Lore

Spinel was misidentified for centuries, mistaken for more well-known stones. It now has growing recognition for its natural beauty.

Properties and Benefits

- Thought to promote energy, endurance, and passion.
- Said to support loyalty and renewal in relationships.

Fashion and Jewelry

Spinel is valued in rings, earrings, and necklaces. Its durability makes it suitable for daily wear. Designers are using it more in modern styles due to its color variety and resilience.

Sardonyx: The Stone of Strength

Sardonyx is known for its layered bands of reddish-brown and white, creating a bold look.

Color and Appearance

This variety of chalcedony features sharp color contrasts and was used historically in carved pieces like cameos.

History and Lore

The Romans believed sardonyx provided strength and courage, especially in battle.

Properties and Benefits

- Thought to bring stability, confidence, and optimism.
- Associated with better communication and emotional grounding.

Fashion and Jewelry

- Used in vintage-style rings and pendants.
- Common in cameos and intaglios due to its layered structure.

Conclusion

August's three birthstones peridot, spinel, and sardonyx offer a wide range of colors, meanings, and historical depth. Whether chosen for personal significance or style, these gems each tell a unique story. Celebrate August with stones that reflect strength, light, and individuality.